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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/082,343	02/26/2002	Kenichi Ueyama	219735US3	4098

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EXAMINER

COMSTOCK, DAVID C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3732

DATE MAILED: 06/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/082,343

Applicant(s)

UEYAMA ET AL.

Examiner

David Comstock

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 March 2005.
2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 February 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, 8, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Viltro et al. (5,837,005).

Viltro et al. disclose a warming pad 10 of sheet form having a plurality of heating parts 16 in the center thereof and a margin around the heating parts, i.e. the border around each of the heating parts 16 (see Figs. 1, 2, and 4; col. 3, line 34). The heating part includes an oxygen (from ambient air) activated heat generating material 18 which contains iron powder, activated charcoal, vermiculite (a moisture-retaining element), water, and salt (i.e. sodium chloride) (see col. 2, lines 29-32). The pad is capable of being wrapped around a user's hair with either the release paper still attached or in the embodiment with alternative fastening means, since the sheet is flexible and of a generally appropriate size, (see Figs. 1 and 2; col. 3, lines 55-57; and col. 4, lines 15-34). Release paper is a water resistant material since it is coated with wax or the like to protect the adhesive while still being readily releasable.

Claims 3, 4, 10, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Zeoli-Jones (5,840,418).

Zeoli-Jones disclose a method and device for treating hair comprising applying an oiliness compound, i.e. conditioner, to the hair and then wrapping the tied hair, which includes any and all portions of the hair pulled up for treatment, with a warming tool 12 (see Figs. 3 and 4; col. 1, lines 14-21; and col. 5, lines 6-36). The warming tool is of sheet form and has a plurality of heating parts 24-56, even numbers (see Fig. 2). The tool 12 leaves at least the part of the hair near the roots unwrapped.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zeoli-Jones (5,840,418).

Zeoli-Jones disclose the claimed invention except for explicitly mentioning that the conditioner includes an organic acid (claims 5 and 13) or is pH balanced (claims 6 and 14). However, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a conditioner with an organic acid, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design

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choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416. It is also noted that it is old and well-known to provide conditioners with an organic acid (see e.g. Chimento 5,270,035 col. 2, lines 6-16). It also would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the conditioner with a slightly acidic pH between 2 to 4.5, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. With regard to claims 7 and 12, it also would have been obvious to provide the oiliness compound with an emulsified state that is broken between about 55 and 60 degrees Celcius, again, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. It is noted that conditioners necessarily have some given pH level and some given temperature at which they are broken down from their emulsified state. Thus, it is merely a matter of obvious design choice to determine the optimum or workable ranges of these values, as set forth above. With regard to claims 19 and 21, the structure limitations do not affect the method in a manipulative sense, but rather, merely amount to the claiming of a use of a particular structure, i.e. water resistant material. Therefore, these claim limitations cannot be given patentable weight. *Ex parte Pfeiffer*, 1962 C.D. 408 (1961).

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Viltro et al. (5,837,005) in view of Kao Corporation (WO 99/51174) ('174).

Viltro discloses the claimed invention except for the water-absorbent polymer. The '174 reference discloses that moisture-retaining elements (of which vermiculite is one) "can contain a variety of components such as vermiculite, calcium silicate, silica gel, silica porous substances, alumina, pulp, wood powder, water-absorbing polymers, etc." (see page 14, lines 15-20). Thus, it would have been obvious to substitute some or all of the vermiculite for an amount of water-absorbing polymers, in view of '174 since this amounts to nothing more than the substitution of functionally equivalent moisture-retaining elements known in the art. It would have been further obvious to provide each of the components in the amount of approximately: 40-60% iron powder, 1-3% sodium chloride, 1-5% activated carbon, 3-5% water-absorbent polymer, and 3-10% vermiculite; since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233.

Claims 16-18 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Viltro et al. (5,837,005).

Viltro discloses the claimed invention except for explicitly disclosing a heat-generating material in an amount of approximately 0.05-0.3 g/cm² of the heating part (claim 16) or explicitly locating the heating parts between 3-15 cm from the edge of the warming tool over the periphery thereof (claim 17). It would have been obvious to provide the heat-generating material in an amount of approximately 0.05-0.3 g/cm² of the heating part, and to locate the heating parts between 3-15 cm from the edge of the warming tool over the periphery thereof, since it has been held that where the general

conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. With regard to claims 18 and 20, it also would have been obvious to form the water resistant material of synthetic resin, paper, metal, or a non-woven fabric, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416.

Response to Arguments

In response to Applicant's argument that Viltro et al. (5,837,005) does not anticipate or render obvious Applicant's invention, as presently amended, it is noted that Viltro et al. is capable, at least under a broadest reasonable interpretation, of meeting the new limitations of the claim, as set forth above in the rejection. Specifically, the release paper is water resistant because it is waxed to prevent the paper from remaining adhered to the adhesive layer and it is an outermost sheet. Furthermore, the release paper is capable of contacting the hair. It is noted that the user would not be exposed to any adhesive, since layer 14 does not need to be removed. It is noted that, although not applied in the present rejection, Viltro et al. discloses that the material layers can comprise any material including hydrophobic materials. Moreover, other water-resistant materials would be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art.

In response to Applicant's argument that Zeoli-Jones (5,480,418) does not render obvious Applicant's invention, it has been held that to be entitled to weight in method claims, the recited structure limitations therein must affect the method in a

manipulative sense, and not amount to the mere claiming of a use of a particular structure. *Ex parte Pfeiffer*, 1962 C.D. 408 (1961). The manipulative steps of the method (e.g. obtaining hair, wrapping hair) are not affected by the water resistant nature of the material as the outermost layer. Moreover, the way in which the tool is wrapped around hair should be set forth using active positive steps (e.g. "wrapping", "contacting" etc.).

Applicant's arguments concerning Ono et al. (US 6,629,964) are irrelevant since Examiner did not apply Ono et al. in the last office action.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

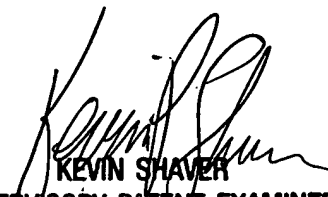
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Comstock whose telephone number is (571) 272-4710. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



D. Comstock
30 May 2005



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